

François Roche  
**Gre(Y)en (a  
history of local  
operative  
criticism)**

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... that seems to pretend to be a history of the stuttering position between Green and Grey, between chlorophyll addiction, the dream of an ideal biotope, re-primitivized, re-artificialized, in pursuit of the lost paradise, the lost Eden Park, a story for little boys and girls to put their fears to bed and ... the Grey, the deep Grey, which never appears in the visible spectrum ... (*"The greatest trick the devil ever played was convincing the world that he did not exist,"* said Baudelaire<sup>1</sup>) ... an antagonism of stealth forces, an embedded demon: mixture of contradictory human desires emerging from the mud, from permanent, unpredictable, and irreducible conflicts ... factor of domination and servitude, destruction and emergences, which fireworks an unlimited source of arrogance and illusion, through which the notions of success and failure depend on a kind of absurd Pendulum<sup>2</sup> of life and death, which, as an Infinite unstable movement, caresses the boundaries of them both ... polymerizing ugliness and beauty, obstacles and possibilities, waste materials and efflorescence, threats and protection, technological phantasms and the revenge of nature into a knot, into a process of becoming, a never-ending movement ... the Grey – where we glide into this silky, strange sensation that scares you and caresses you ... that scares you and caresses you ...

Faced with the autistic, blind, deaf, and mute violence of our technological, industrial, mercantile, and human servo-mechanisms, we are at the crossroads where nature reacts ... with violence and without warning, in a faltering of the original chaos ... in mutiny against the organization of men ... Gaia seems to take revenge (Katrina, El Niño, Cyclone Jeanne, Tomas and Nargis, the Xynthia storm, Ewinia typhoon, Indonesian and Japanese earthquakes, collateral tsunamis all the way to Fukushima ... chain of devastating incertitude, unpredictable in spite of our seismographic sciences) ... the elements rage and the gods, so quick to pardon our folly, seem powerless to appease a rebellion armed with infernal force ...

Nature is not an ideological "green washing" for backyard politics, nor the millenarian, eschatologist dream of Eden Park, from which we have very fortunately escaped, freeing ourselves from gatherer-hedonist blindness to negotiate consciousness with the hostile dark forces that get stuck in the depths of the forest ...

But these forces have come out of their hiding places ... their biotopes, they are invading the spaces that Man thought he could take without giving anything in exchange, without transaction ... war has been declared ... nature's revenge is not a bedtime story for innocent minds ... our bellicose enemy operates openly ...

in the light of day ... ultimate arrogance ...

How can we reveal the conflict between strategies of “knowledge and domination” of the first and the monstrous and wildly beautiful destruction of the other ... as the field of an unpredictable battle, disconnected, cleared of all the greenish moralism jumble and its post-capitalism lure ... ? ... To help us feel this ambivalence, this permanent disequilibrium, where contingencies are the main factor in emergences, let us navigate in this history of “gre(Y)en”...



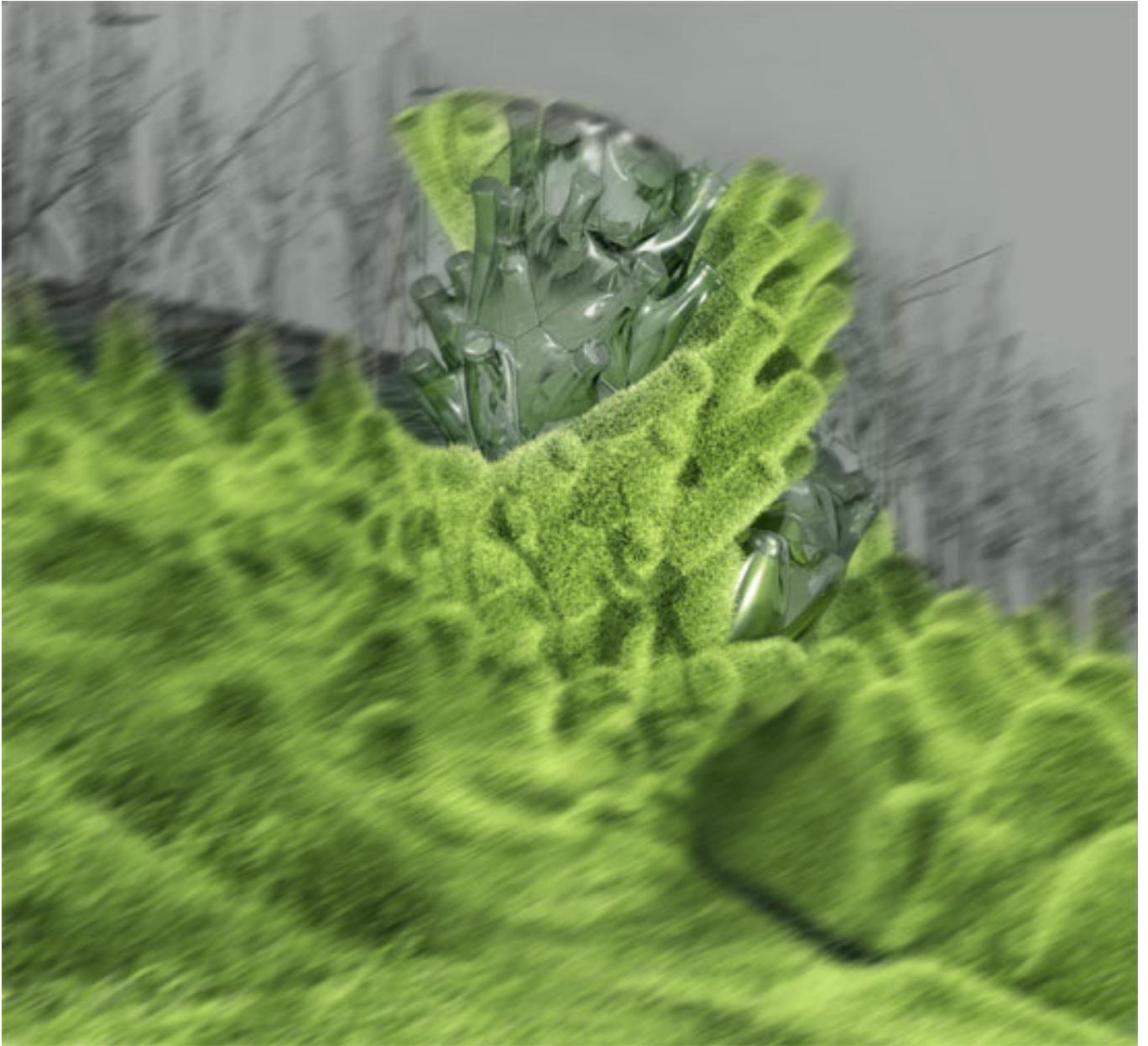
François Roche, *Aqua alta 2.0*, 2000. Bottle for Lagoon bar at Venice Biennale.

... From a physiological early simple dualism “shadow & light” in 1990 where Neuschwanstein<sup>3</sup> Grotto is f@ctionally adjusted to *Playtime*<sup>4</sup> mirror reflection, weakly connecting a cavernous, dark, humid, sensorially-primitive atmosphere with its schizophrenically antagonist and twin brother, crystalline, cold, luminous, dry, technologically-blind as the recognition of an impossible stuttered dialogue, to ... a “Growing up” for chlorophyll energy and entropy in 1993 which will collapse and strangle a fragile “chicken legs” house, wrapped and dominated masochistically by the danger of its own predictable death, if the maintenance is not ritualized by the owner as a permanent conflict against the structure’s destructive strength and his need to survive ... to a blur petrochemical “Filtration” in 1997, with 5000m<sup>2</sup> of plastic stripes floating in the trees, on the edge of a seasonal tidy wild river, carrying nitrate and insecticide plastic bag residues that the farmer abandoned on the bank of his field, waiting for this rising of the water as a depolluting natural service, in charge of erasing the trace of his chemical addiction, and paradoxically back to the visible spectrum when the river is low again,

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hanging from the branches ... the “Filtration” layer reveals through the concentration of the plastic wasted in the canopies an aesthetic countryside planning coming directly from its human managing ... to a traveling to the weird ... “aqua alta 1.0,” in 1998, sucking up the disgusting viscous over-polluted liquidity called the Venetian Lagoon, to use capillarity’s water forces of the contaminated to infiltrate, literally, the building emergences from these lagoon substances, to ... “aqua alta 2.0,” the Venetian bar in 2000 at the Architectural Biennale of Venice where “conventioners” could refresh themselves by drinking “in live” the lagoon soup, but depolluted through a military purification machine<sup>5</sup> to test in the condition of the Biennale; the schizophrenia between green-washing rhetoric and repulsive digestive paranoia sprung from doubts regarding the reliability of the cleaning engine, that people promote as an efficient technology (for others) ... to “shearing,” in 2001, as a simple stealth private House, organizing a simulacrum of its own impermanence and apparent fragility, unfolding in the countryside, but using for the whole envelope the authorized petro-chemistry non-biodegradable fabric spread and disseminated in nature to preserve planted young trees from being destroyed by rabbits, in an agriculture industrial logic ... to “Dustyrelief,” in 2002, for the Museum of Contemporary Art in Bangkok, where the dust of the city and the residue of the traffic jam (carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide) dressed her skin and her biotope, as the recognition of public transportation failure in the “greynish” equatorial eroticism, where this special fog of specs and particles becomes the traces of hypertrophic human convulsing activity, as a second adaptive nature, through a bottom-up unpredictable un-mastering un-planning city aesthetic. Without delegating power to autocratic and aseptic technocratic experts at the place of the chaotic emergences of the multitudes, the aleatory rhizomes, the arborescent growth are at the same time a factor of her transformation and her operational mode. The non-hygienic intoxicating urban chaos is the sign of its human vitalism, as permanent vibration between *Eros* and *Thanatos* ... the invisible but breathable substances are bred, attracted by electrostatic machine to “skin” the hairy freak, exacerbating a schizo climate between indoor (white cube and labyrinth in an Euclidian geometry) and outdoor (dust relief on topologic geometry) ... and ... and in a second step collecting the particle substances, dropped down in the monsoon period, through drainage systems ... to create on the side the tea pavilion extension directly coming from the compacted particles brick produced “by” the failure and the



François Roche, *Symbiosis Hood*, 2010, Korea. Courtesy of the author.

beauty of the city ... to the ...  
“mosquitosbottleneck” scenario, in Trinidad, 2002, trying to negotiate with the infestation of the Nile Virus carried by mosquitos, the recognition of this disease as an objective paranoia triggering strategies for safety, in a weekend residential house. The fragile net, through a Klein bottle apparatus, preserves, protects, but also disjoins the living of the first in resonance with the death of the other. And the sound of their agony, buzzing in the double trapped membrane, becomes the proof of the efficiency of the system, preserving human against nature, against its offensive biotope, protected and surrounded by the theatre of its own barbarity ... to the buffalo Machismo no-tech Machinism in “HybridMuscle,” in 2003, Thailand, as a local mammal muscling power station, lifting with gears of a two-ton steel counterweight, transformed in a battery house, transformed first into an electricity plug and connections and secondly in pneumatic rubber muscles movement of leaves in elastomer membrane to wind the suffocating hot sweaty climate ... as an endogeneous-exogeneous storytelling ... to the “greengorgon,” in 2005, as phasmid morphologies, embedded in a wood, which feed the confusion between artificial and domesticated nature ... where all the outdoor surfaces are dedicated to vertical wet swamp recycling the inert grey water ... as a purification plan infrastructure, rejecting only clean liquidities in the Léman Lake ... to the “Mipi,” in 2006, a PI Bar in the temple of cognitive science, the MIT-Cambridge campus, as an extension of the Media Lab, to experiment through urine therapy absorption, the immunotherapy of the individual human production, including a schizoid balance between disgusting and healthy effect ... to a stochastic machine that vitrifies the city, in “Olzweg,” 2006, starting the contamination from a radical architecture museum in the pursuit of Frederick Kiesler endlessnesslessness. This smearing is done through the industrial glass recycling (mainly French wines bottles), swallowed and vomited through a process of staggering, scattering, and stacking by a twelve-meter-high machine. The random aggregation is a part of this unpredictable transformation, as a fuzzy logic of the vanishing point. The machine works to extend the museum and collect “voluntary prisoners” wrapped in the permanent entropy of the graft, testing the glass maze through its multiple uncertain trajectories, to loose themselves and rediscover this heterotopian, non-panoptical sensation of their youngness, using if necessary PDA on RFID to rediscover their positioning ... the opposite of an architecture that petrifies, historicizes,

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panopticalizes ... to the “waterflux,” in 2007, for a scenario scooping out hollows in a full wood volume by a five-axes drill machine with 1000 trees (2000m<sup>3</sup>) coming directly from the maintenance of the forest around the location of extracting-manufacturing-transformation, as an anthroposophic logic, where technologies and machine are territorialized from the site, endemic to a situation and its mutation, reactivating accessorially local forest economy ... to the “gardenofearthlydelights,” in 2008, a toxic garden in a new green house in Croatia, on the site of an old Middle Ages Apotiker Franciscan monk medical plantation, protected behind a restricted area, but able to be tasted and tested through a distillation de-concentration machinism process, and bar ... only by voluntary desire, in a similar way to the Japanese “Fugu” physiological and psychological effects ... with an “at your own risk” protocol, and where ecosophy is considered as a global interaction, porous to the human body, as a Gaia<sup>6</sup> exchange, a chain of interaction and dependences ... articulating life and death and its knitting paranoia ... to “Heshotmedown,” in 2008, for a tracked biomass machine penetrating into the (De) Militarized Zone, the DMZ, between North and South Korea, collecting the rotten substances, the superficial coating of the forest in decomposition, and bringing back this material to plug all the external surfaces of the ballistic-like building, for a natural eco-insulation, through the fermentation of the grass and the heat coming from its chemical transformation. Full of land mines, the DMZ is a restricted zone, where North and South never stop playing the Cold War. The machine collects the ingredients of this pathological period and recycles them for productive use, from a highly dangerous no-man’s land abandoned since the end of the war (more than half a century ago), which come back to its natural wildness, with the reappearing of elves, wizards, witches, and harpies, and some new vegetal species. Legends and fairy tales are transported out of the deepness of the forest, as in a *Stalker*<sup>7</sup> experiment to touch the unknown ... to “I’mlostinParis,” in 2008, as a laboratory for bacterial culture, called the “Rhizobium” agent, cultivated in 200 beakers, for its potential to increase nitrogen percentages without the chemical manure of the substrate of each plant, after the re-injection of this substance into the individual nutritional aeroponic system ... for a *Rear Window*<sup>8</sup> minimum distance to the conservatism and “petite bourgeois” nature of a Parisian neighborhood, the opposite view on a closed courtyard ... this Devil’s Rock<sup>9</sup> emergence is constituted by 2000 ferns from the Devonian period, technologically domesticated to survive

in the actual “regressive monarchic French period” ... to a paranoid system, the “TbWnD” (*the building which never dies*), in 2011, an alert detection or a marker of our past/future symptoms: a Zumtobel laboratory on “dark adaptation” and on solar radiation intensity detection, covered by phosphorescent components (“*Isobiot@opic*” *oxide pigment made from raw uranium*) working as a UV sensor and detector to indicate and analyze the intensity of the UV rays that touched the area by day (including on humans and all other species). 5000 glass components reveal the depletion of the ozone concentration in the stratosphere and simultaneously the origin of this phenomenon, the sun’s radiation. This lab articulates the risk coming from ozone weakness (industrial pollution / CO2) combined with the paranoia coming from the last century’s scientific ignorance or criminality, developed by the exploitation of the characteristic of some natural element<sup>10</sup> ... to several escaping, coming first through a utopian protocol “an architecture des ‘humeurs’,” in 2011, with a self-organized urbanism conditioned by a bottom-up system in which the multitudes<sup>11</sup> are able to drive the entropy of their own system of construction, their own system of “vivre ensemble.” Based on the potential offered by contemporary bioscience, the rereading of human corporalities in terms of physiology and chemical balance to make palpable and perceptible the emotional transactions of the “animal body,” the headless body, the body’s chemistry, and information about individuals’ adaptation, sympathy, empathy, and conflict, when confronted with a particular situation and environment ... to adaptations to the “*malentendus*”<sup>12</sup> of this result, to an endless process of construction through “*machinism*” un-determinism and unpredictable behavior with the development of a secretive and weaving machine that can generate a vertical structure by means of extrusion and sintering (full-size 3D printing) using a hybrid raw material (a bio-plastic-cement) that chemically agglomerates to physically constitute the computational trajectories. This structural calligraphy works like a machinist stereotomy comprised of successive geometrics according to a strategy of permanent production of anomalies ... with no standardization, no repetition, except for the procedures and protocols, at the base of this technoid slum’s emergence ... and ... last but not least, the last experiment, the “hypnosisroom,” in 2006 (Paris) and 2012 (Japan) ... using a hypnosis session for a star-gate effect, in the pursuit of the Somnambulist feminine political movement, from the first half of the nineteenth century, using hypnosis (called “magnetism” at the time) in an attempt to

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develop spaces of freedom, an egalitarian, un-racial, un-sexist social contract, that could not be perceived and explored without travelling through this layer ... at the opposite end of the impossibility (or difficulty) of modifying the mechanisms of the real, tangible, political state of the world ... this pre-feminist movement sought, on the contrary, to create this suggestive, immersive, and distanced layer of another social contract ... Although demonized and treated as charlatanism, all of pre-modern reformist thought drew on this movement ... and ...

*End of the first chapter ...*

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1

“Mes chers frères, n’oubliez jamais, quand vous entendrez vanter le progrès des lumières, que la plus belle des ruses du diable est de vous persuader qu’il n’existe pas.” *Le Spleen de Paris*, Baudelaire, 1858.

2

Edgar Allen Poe’s “The Pit and the Pendulum” as the first scenario of Bachelor Machines.

3

Neuschwanstein Castle and its artificial romantic grotto were commissioned by Ludwig II of Bavaria as a retreat and a homage to Richard Wagner.

4

*Playtime* (1967) is a movie by Jacques Tati that portrays a glass-cold-deterritorialized futurist urbanism.

5

A machine using both ozone and ceramic system to create drinkable water, without the right from Italian authorities to call it “Natural Venice Water.”

6

The Gaia hypothesis is a bio-geo-chemical scientific theory. It states that the earth, including the biosphere, is a dynamic physiological system that has operated in harmony with life for three billion years.

7

*Stalker* (1979) is a movie by Andrei Tarkovski. It takes place in a kind of after-war interzone where a protocol or ritual has to be strictly followed to avoid waking up the forces nobody knows ...

8

A 1954 film by Alfred Hitchcock about voyeurism, relations within a neighborhood, phantasms, and realities ...

9

Devil’s Rock is in the United States. It was used by Steven Spielberg as the alien meeting point in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977). In the movie, Richard Dreyfus reproduced Devil’s Rock in his own livingroom by destroying, in a lucid rage, a small decorative neighborhood garden in order to get enough material, soil, plants, and mud to build it.

10

From the discovery of the properties of radon by Pierre and Marie Curie, to the plutonium after-effects of the Little Boy atomic bomb.

11

In Spinoza and Negri’s senses.

12

A French word that navigates between “mishearing” and “misunderstanding.”